

Linguistic Hybridization in Odia: Odikṛt, Oḍilish, and Oḍindī

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Received: 27 Apr 2026; Received in revised form: 22 May 2026; Accepted: 25 May 2026; Available online: 01 Jun 2026

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Abstract— The current state of the Oḍiā language and the process of linguistic hybridisation observable within it have been analysed from both scientific and socio-linguistic perspectives. This study primarily focuses on the origin and grammatical application of hybrid terms such as ‘Odikṛt’ (Oḍi-a + Prā-kṛt or Sams-kṛt), ‘Oḍilish’ (Oḍi-a + Eng-lish), and ‘Oḍindī’ (Oḍi-a + Hin-dī). Although Oḍiā is a classical language, the forces of globalisation and intense cultural exchange have led it to blend with other languages, creating a vibrant new domain of code mixing and switching. In particular, urban environments—driven by education, media, social media, and considerations of social status—have significantly transformed the fundamental structure and character of the language. This transformation represents either a challenge to Oḍiā identity or a natural linguistic evolution. The essay also offers practical suggestions for maintaining a healthy balance between preserving the purity of the Oḍiā language and embracing necessary modern adaptations.



Keywords— Linguistic Hybridization, Social media, Linguistic Transformation, Odia Language, Odikṛt, Oḍilish & Oḍindī

I. INTRODUCTION

Language is a dynamic social institution that continually evolves and refines itself with the passage of time. The Oḍiā language is no exception to this reality. As one of India’s ancient Indo-Aryan languages, Oḍiā has successfully preserved its classical dignity while emerging as a harmonious synthesis of diverse linguistic influences (Dhal-1976). The linguistic journey of Oḍiā began with the ancient Prakrit tradition of *tatsama* (direct borrowings) and *tadbhava* (adapted) words and has now extended to the modern Oḍilish culture (Sahu, 1994; Mathur, 2015). In contemporary times, the pervasive influence of Hindi films and English-medium education has made the use of ‘Oḍindī’ and ‘Oḍilish’ completely natural in the daily conversations of Oḍiā households (Mohapatra-2025; Chetia-2017). The structural fabric of the Oḍiā language rests on a profound Sanskrit foundation, popularly known as the ‘Odikṛt’ style. This style is essentially a refined and harmonious blend of *tatsama* and *tadbhava* words, which

endows the language with both depth and lucidity (Sahu-1994; Mathur-2015).

In the latter part of the nineteenth century, the Oḍiā language fought a major battle against Bengali and Hindi influences to preserve its very existence (Palai-2021). As a result, in 1936, Odisha emerged as the first independent province in India formed on the basis of language. However, in the post-independence era and especially since the beginning of the twenty-first century, the dominance of English and Hindi has created new challenges for the Oḍiā language. In today’s society, ‘Oḍilish’ (Oḍi-a + Eng-lish) has become the common medium of communication among the educated class and urban population. This process has led to such an extensive blending of English words with Oḍiā grammar that it is gradually taking the shape of a distinct hybrid language (Biswal-2009; Mathur-2015).

Alongside this, the influence of ‘Oḍindī’ (Oḍi-a + Hi-ndi) is increasingly felt through Hindi films, music, and the speech of Oḍiā migrants (Mohapatra-2025; Chetia-2017). This

Hindi influence is particularly evident in northern and western Odisha, where it is visibly altering both vocabulary and pronunciation patterns. In this essay, we will examine this linguistic evolution of the Oḍiā language in depth. It is particularly noteworthy how, in major cities such as Bhubaneswar, Sambalpur, Berhamapur, Angul, and Cuttack, the Oḍiā language is slowly losing its original character in educational and professional spheres and adopting a hybrid form (Reddit user-2025; Chetia-2017).

In this study, the contemporary transformation of the Oḍiā language has been understood through the linguistic processes of ‘code-mixing’ and ‘code-switching’ (Mehra-2026; Biswal-2009; Chetia-2017). It is also evident that while the ‘Oḍikṛt’ style remains largely confined to traditional and formal domains, ‘Oḍilish’ and ‘Oḍindī’ have emerged as powerful, dynamic social forces. This change is not merely linguistic; it serves as a clear indicator of deeper cultural and psychological shifts. A close analysis of the changes occurring in the Oḍiā language reveals that they are the natural outcome of linguistic contact (Sahu-1994; Himani-2024). According to linguists, whenever two or more distinct speech communities live together or when multiple languages hold prominence within the same society, linguistic hybridisation inevitably takes place (Menasah-2010; Chetia-2017).

II. OḌIKṚT: THE PRĀKṚTA OR SANSKRIT-BASED FOUNDATION

A significant portion of the Oḍiā language’s vocabulary is derived from Sanskrit. In linguistics, this process is referred to as ‘Oḍikṛt’. Sanskrit words have influenced Oḍiā through three major streams: *Tatsama*: Words that are identical or nearly identical to their Sanskrit originals (e.g., *Prajā* (Citizens), *Ratna* (Jewel), *Prāntara* (Vast Open land), *Bhakti* (Devotion), *Parjyāpta* (Sufficient), etc.). *Tadbhava*: Words that have evolved and been modified from their Prakrit-Sanskrit roots (e.g., *Kumbhāra* (Potter), *Kendu* (Diospyros Melanoxylon), *Sāṅga* (Friend), *Cora* (Thief), *Naukā* (Boat), etc.). *Kṛdanta* and *Taddhita*: Words formed according to Sanskrit grammatical rules of derivation and suffixation (e.g., *Tyāga* (Sacrifice), *Bibaha* (Marriage), *Śoka* (Sorrow), *Bhaba* (Emotion), *Śāpa* (Curse), *Abatāra* (Incarnation), etc.) (Sahu-1994; Mohapatra-1943; Devangri-2025). The following are some prominent examples of the Oḍikṛt style: (Mohapatra-1997)

Sanskrit Root	Oḍiā Tatsama	Oḍiā Tadbhava
<i>Dugdha</i> (milk)	<i>Dugdha</i> (Milk)	<i>Dudha</i> (Milk)
<i>Matsya</i> (Fish)	<i>Matsya</i> (Fish)	<i>Mācha</i> (Fish)
<i>Hasta</i> (Hand)	<i>Hasta</i> (Hand)	<i>Hāta</i> (Hand)

Sanskrit Root	Oḍiā Tatsama	Oḍiā Tadbhava
<i>Sandhyā</i> (Evening)	<i>Sandhyā</i> (Evening)	<i>Sanja</i> (Evening)
<i>Kūpa</i> (Well)	<i>Kūpa</i> (Well)	<i>Kūa</i> (Well)

The importance of the Oḍikṛt style lies in the gravity and sophistication it imparts to the Oḍiā language. Sanskrit-derived words are particularly indispensable in domains such as spirituality, science, education, and jurisprudence. Words like ‘*anurāgī*’ (Enthusiast), ‘*pratiyogī*’ (Competitor), *kaḷpanā* (Imagination), *suśāsana* (Righteous rule), and ‘*gōraba*’ (Pride) form the very backbone of the Oḍiā language (Sahu-1994; Mohapatra-1943; Chetia-2017; Padhi-n.d.).

III. OḌILISH: THE NEW DYNAMISM OF LANGUAGE

In urban Odisha, the influence of English has become so profound that it has given rise to a new dialect or variety, popularly known as ‘Oḍilish’. The primary driver behind this phenomenon is code-mixing (Sinha-2009; Chetia-2017). In this style, English nouns or verbs are freely inserted into Oḍiā sentence structures. A grammatical analysis of Oḍilish reveals several interesting patterns (Nicodemo-2024; Lavadia-2025; Mohapatra-2023) (Table-1).

Table-1, Grammatical analysis of Oḍilish

Oḍilish Sentence	Grammatical Mixing	Meaning
ଓଫିସ୍‌କୁ ଗଲାଣି। (Se Office-ku galāṇi.)	English Noun + Oḍiā Case Ending	He/she has gone to the office.
ଫିରମ୍ କର। (Tike Verify-kara.)	English Verb + Oḍiā Auxiliary	Please verify it.
Exam-ଟି ବହୁତ ହାର୍ଡ୍ ଥିଲା। (Exam-tā bahuta hard thilā.)	English Noun + Article + English Adjective	The exam was very difficult.
ମୁଁ ଡିଆଲ୍ କରୁଛି। (Mum tumaku Call-karibi.)	English Verb + Oḍiā Future Tense	I will call you.

Using this kind of language among the educated youth is often seen as a marker of social status and sophistication. It indicates that language is not merely a tool for communication but also a powerful indicator of a person's education and social class (Reddit user-2025; Chetia-2017; Mohapatra-2023).

IV. OḍINDĪ: HINDI INFILTRATION AND INFLUENCE

The influence of Hindi on the Oḍiā language primarily comes from two major sources — commerce and business, and entertainment. In the Sambalpur dialect of Western Odisha, the impact of Hindi is particularly strong, giving rise to what can aptly be called 'Oḍindī'. However, this hybrid form has now spread across the entire state of Odisha (Mohapatra-2025; Tripathy-2025; Chetia-2017). Here are some notable examples of Hindi-influenced Oḍiā speech:

- **Pronunciation Changes:** The final 'ୱ' (a) sound in many Oḍiā words is frequently dropped under Hindi influence. For instance, instead of saying 'ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର' (*Bhubanesvara*), people now say 'ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱ' (*Bhubanesvar*). Similarly, 'ଭାତ' (*Bhāta-Rice*) is pronounced as 'ଭାଡ଼' (*Bhāt-Rice*) (Mohapatra-2025; Parichha-2025).
- **Use of Hindi Phrases and Words:** Hindi expressions such as 'थोड़ी ना' (*thoḍī nā-it's not like*), 'फिर भी' (*phir bhi-Still*), 'मस्त' (*mast-Superb*), and many others have seamlessly integrated into everyday Oḍiā conversation (Mohapatra-2025; Parichha-2025).
- **Difficulty in Numerical Counting:** A significant number of English-medium students find it difficult to count from 1 to 100 in pure Oḍiā, while they can do so effortlessly in Hindi or English. Many now prefer hybrid pronunciations like 'एक-एक' (*eka-ek*), 'दुई-दो' (*dui-do*), 'तिनी-तिन' (*tini-tin*), 'चारि-चार' (*cāri-cār*), 'पाँच-पांच' (*pāṇca-pāṇc*), 'छा-छे' (*cha-che*), 'सात-सात' (*sāta-sāt*), 'आठ' (*āṭha-āt*), 'नहीं-नो' (*na-no*), and 'दास-दास' (*daśa-dās*). These shortened forms are easier and faster to articulate in rapid speech (Reddit user-2025).

V. SOCIAL MEDIA AND LINGUISTIC TRANSFORMATION

Social media platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp, and Instagram have turned into a new laboratory for the Oḍiā language (Dey-2023; Lavadia-2025). Here, the use of Roman-Oḍiā (Oḍiā written in Roman script) has become extremely widespread. This practice simplifies

Oḍiā grammar and frequently encourages the use of 'Oḍilish' vocabulary. According to research, 30% to 40% of words in Oḍiā comments on social media are borrowed from English or Hindi (Nayak-2021; Yuana-2022). Examples include: *Tame Khai sarilani?* (*Tame khāi sārilaṇi-ତମେ ଖାଇ ସାରିଲଣି?* – Have you finished eating?) & *sab kuchh chhod diya tum keliye* (*Sab kucha choḍ diā tum keliye-ସବ୍ କୁଚ୍ ଛୋଡ଼ିଦିଆ ତୁମ୍ କେ ଲିଯେ* -I left everything for you). This ongoing tension between Oḍikṛt and Oḍilish in the Oḍiā language is not merely linguistic — it is deeply connected to social identity (Mohapatra-2023; Mohapatra-2021; Martineau, 2020).

PURITY VERSUS USAGE

Oḍiā linguists are broadly divided into two camps. One group strongly advocates for linguistic purity. They believe that the Sanskrit-based 'Oḍikṛt' style should dominate word selection, as it preserves the language's dignity and classical character. They express concern that original Oḍiā words such as 'Ātmagarbī' (self-respecting), 'Svārthi' (selfish), and 'Anusandhāna' (research/ investigation) are gradually falling out of use, which threatens the language's independence (Mohapatra-2025; Sahu-1994; Yuana-2022). On the other hand, scholars with a modern outlook view linguistic hybridisation as a natural evolution. They argue that when people use English words like 'Depression' or 'Stress', they are often expressing feelings for which there are either no precise traditional Oḍiā equivalents or the native words lack the same social weight and impact. Linguist Homi Bhabha has described this space as the "Third Space", where two cultures meet and create a new, hybrid identity (Bisoi-2026; Mohapatra-2021; Lavadia-2025).

EDUCATION AND THE FUTURE GENERATION

The position of the Oḍiā language in the education sector is a matter of serious concern. In Odisha, speaking Oḍiā is sometimes discouraged in CBSE and ICSE schools. Many children learn the English alphabet before they properly learn their mother tongue. As a result, 'Oḍilish' dominates their speech. They prefer to converse with friends in Hindi or English, causing the Oḍiā language to be increasingly confined to domestic and informal settings. Although the New Education Policy (NEP 2020) emphasises mother-tongue-based education, in practice, the overwhelming pressure of Hindi and English is pushing Oḍiā to the margins (Reddit user-2025; Mohapatra-2025; Lavadia-2025). According to census data, the percentage of Oḍiā speakers at the national level has declined from 3.62% in 1971 to 3.10% in 2011. This is a deeply worrying trend (Mohapatra-2025).

ROLE OF LITERATURE AND MASS MEDIA

In *Oḍiā* literature, the *Oḍikṛt* style has always enjoyed high prestige. In the writings of Fakir Mohan Senapati, we see a masterful and refined use of the *Oḍiā* language, where he strongly criticises the blind imitation of foreign languages (Mohapatra H.S. – 2025). However, in contemporary literature, the use of ‘*Oḍilish*’ and ‘*Oḍindī*’ is increasingly accepted as a reflection of modern reality (Bisoi-2026; Latifah-2024; Nayak-2021). In *Oḍiā* Short-story and poems, the mixing of Hindi and English words is deliberately used to appeal to the younger generation (Table-2).

Table-2, *Oḍiā* Short-story and Poem

<i>Oḍiā</i> Short-story & Poem text Mixing Code Hindi & English	
“ମୂର୍ତ୍ତି କେମିତି ହେବ ଖୁବ୍ ଅପ୍ ହୁ ଡେବ୍, ମଡର୍ଣ୍ଣ, ପ୍ରେଭୋକେଟିଭ୍, ମାନ୍ ବିସ୍ଫୋରକ.... ।” -ବ୍ଲାକ୍ ଡ୍ରାଗନ୍ (Hota-2012)	“Mūrtti Kemiti Haba? खुब (Khub) up to date, Modern, Provocative, mane Bisphoraka... ” - Black Dragan (Hota-2012)
“ରାମ ନାମ ସତ୍ୟ ହେଁ ରାମ ନାମ ଜପନା ଆୟା ରାମ ଗୟା ରାମ ପରାୟା ମାଲ୍ ଅପନା । ଆଲା ରୋଜା ହର୍କୁଲେସ୍ ଓଲାଡ୍ ମଙ୍କ୍ ଟ୍ରିପଲ୍ ଏକ୍ସ ଜନମ ଭୂମି ଫଳ ଧନୁ ଧୁନ ଶିଆଳ କେରୀ ଶିଂଘା ବାଣ ନାମ ନବମୀ ରାଜ ଖଡ଼ି ଛେଳି ।”-ରାମ (Das- 2015)	“Rāma nāma satya hai Rāma nāma जपना (japanā) आया (āyā) rāma गया (gayā) rāma पराया माल् आपना (parāyā māla apanā). आला (ālā) रोजा (rojā) Hercules Old monk triple x janama bhūmi phaḷa dhanu dhuna śiālā kerī śiṃghā bāṇa nāma navamī rāja khaḍi cheli.”-Rāma (Das-2015)
“ହରେକୃଷ୍ଣ ଦାସ ଚାହେଁ ଅବାକ ଆଶ୍ଚର୍ଯ୍ୟ ଆଜି ଏତେ ଭିଡ଼ ଏତେ ଲୋକ ଏତେ ତେଜ ଦୋକାନ ଆଲୁଅ ପେଟ୍ରୋଲ୍ ବାମ୍ବାରେ ସରକାରୀ ଜିପ୍ ଗାଡ଼ି “ଝିଅରିଂ ହୁଇଲ୍”ରେ ଏହି ଛୁଆଁ ପ୍ରଥମ ଶୀତର	“Harekr̥ṣṇa dāsa cāhem अवाक (abāk) āścaryya āji ete bhirḍa ete loka ete teja dokāna ālua Petrol bāsnāre sarakārī Jep gāḍi “staring wheel”re ehi chuām prathama śītara

ହରେକୃଷ୍ଣ ଦାସ ଚାହେଁ ସହରର ବନ୍ଧୁହୀନ ଜାତି ହୀନ “ନମସ୍କାର” “ଜୟହିନ୍ଦ୍” “ସଲ୍ଲାମ୍” ଭିତରେ ।”-ହରେକୃଷ୍ଣ ଦାସ-୪ (Mohanty-1995)	harekr̥ṣṇa dāsa cāle saharara bandhuhīna jñāti hīna 'namaskāra' 'jayahind' 'sallām' bhitare.”-Harekr̥ṣṇa Dāsa- 4 (Mohanty-1995)
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In *Oḍiā* films and music, the mixing of Hindi and English words is deliberately used to appeal to the younger generation.

- “ହେ ପ୍ରଭୁ! ଥରେ ଦେଖା ଦେ.. ପୁଲେ ଟଙ୍କା ଦେ.. ଦେଖାତ ମିଳିବନି/ ହୁ ତ ଭାରି ବିଜି/ ଟଙ୍କା ତ କମାଇବା/ ନୁହେଁଟ ଏତେ ଲଜି.” {He prabhu! Thare dekha de puḷe ṭaṅkā de... dekhā ta miḷibani tu ta bhari **busy**... ṭaṅkā ta kamāibā numhe ta ete **easy**....} (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UPeVxrEpc&list=RDUPeVxrEpc&start_radio=1)
- Mixing Hindi and English: “...ପୁରୁଷତ୍ବରେ ଉପର ବାଲା/ ବନେଇଥିଲା/ ନାରି... କାହାକୁ କଲା/ କାଲି ସାବେନି... କାହାକୁ କଲା/ ଗୋରୀ... Cool cool ଚେହେରା/ cool... ଲାଗିଛି ସିନା/ beautiful.... ହେଲେ ତାଙ୍କର ହିସାବ ଭାଇ କୋଇ ନେହିଁ ପାଆ.... What is this... this is ମାୟାରେ ବାୟା...yo yaa {फुरसत re upara bālā baneithilā nārī... kāhāku kalā kālī sābeni... kāhaku kala gorī... Cool Cool ceherā cool... lāgantisinā beautiful... hele tāṅkara हिसाब (hisāba) bhāī କୋଇ ନେହିଁ ପାଆ (koi nemhi pāyā)... What is this... this is māyāre bāyā.} (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=007OVk5ix54&list=RD007OVk5ix54&start_radio=1)
- ଲେଜି ଲେଜି ହାର୍ଟ ମୋର ଜେଜି ହେଇପାଏରେ.... (Lazy lazy heart mora crazy heiyāere). (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CnDuWE9AFPs&list=RDCnDuWE9AFPs&start_radio=1)

VI. CONCLUSION

The use of *Oḍikṛt*, *Oḍilish*, and *Oḍindī* in the *Oḍiā* language is a clear reflection of its dynamism and the ongoing social changes around it. Just as heavy English influence on Hindi gave rise to "Hinglish", similar processes are reshaping *Oḍiā* today. The Sanskrit-based *Oḍikṛt* style provides the language with classical dignity and long-term stability. In contrast, *Oḍilish* and *Oḍindī* have emerged as essential responses to the demands of modern communication and urbanisation. Complete rejection of this linguistic hybridisation is neither possible nor practical. However, conscious effort is required to protect the fundamental character of the language. We must strive to preserve the classical Sanskrit foundation of *Oḍiā* while thoughtfully adopting modern styles in such a way that *Oḍiā* identity is

not compromised. Giving priority to the mother tongue in the education system and fostering a deep sense of pride in the *Oḍiā* language within the cultural sphere are essential steps. Only through these measures can *Oḍiā* remain a rich and vibrant language in the future. Change in language is indeed proof of its vitality. Yet, every *Oḍiā* speaker must remain vigilant to ensure that this change does not become a path toward erosion or eventual extinction.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We acknowledge this scholarly research contribution as an outcome of Odia Department, Utkal University, Vani Vihar, Bhubaneswar for supporting an academic and research ambiance with facilities.

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